1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

CHAPTER 3

THE CITY OF GREAT PRINCIPLES

THE name Ta Li, meaning "Great Principles", was given to the city by its founder King Pi-Lo-Ko of Nan Chao in 746 A.D. It was not the first city to be built on the plain, for it was preceded by T'ai Ho Ch'êng, also a capital of Nan Chao, which stood on the site now occupied by T'ai Ho T'sun, a village some five miles south of Ta Li, half way to Hsia Kuan. Earlier than this a fortified site upon the mountain slope above Ta Li shows traces of occupation which may date from neolithic times. Ta Li as it now stands is a walled city rectangular in shape, about one mile long by half a mile in width. At some past date it was enlarged by extending the west and east walls by a third again, and building a new south wall. The old south wall was demolished, but the old south gate, known to day as the Wu Hua Lou, the Tower of Five Glories, was left intact and used as a bell tower. Although the area thus enclosed by walls is large, very little of it is now occupied with buildings. The long main street connecting the north and south gates, and the less busy east and west gate streets, are flanked by quiet residential lanes, which, long before the walls are reached, tail off into market gardens and fields. Almost every house has its ample garden, and wide areas of vacant land are used as parade grounds and fair grounds for the fortnightly market.

It is certain that the city was formerly more inhabited than at present, for within the past century it has sustained two disasters of the first magnitude. In 1874 on the suppression of the Moslem rebellion the citizens of that religion, some ten thousand in number, were put to the sword, and thus probably half, or at least a third, of the inhabitants of Ta Li